

# US scraps Egypt military drill

## Pressure mounts on Washington to suspend military aid

President Barack Obama yesterday said the United States has canceled military exercises with Egypt to protest the killing of hundreds of protesters.

Obama urged Egypt's army-installed authorities to lift a state of emergency and allow peaceful protests but stopped short of suspending \$1.3 billion in annual military aid.

"While we want to sustain our relationship with Egypt, our traditional cooperation cannot continue as usual when civilians are being killed in the streets and rights are being rolled back," Obama told reporters at his vacation home on Martha's Vineyard.

Obama said the United States informed Egypt it was suspending the Bright Star exercises, which has been scheduled every two years since 1981.

The exercises were also called off in 2011 as Egypt was in the throes of the revolt that overthrew longtime strongman Hosni Mubarak, a close US ally.

Egypt has been in turmoil since, with the army on July 3 ousting the country's first democratically elected president, the Islamist Mohamed Morsi.

More than 500 people have died since Wednesday when Egyptian security forces, defying appeals for restraint by the United States and other powers, crushed pro-Morsi demonstrations.

The United States has carefully avoided calling Morsi's ouster a coup, a designation that would require the United States to cut assistance.

Obama said that Morsi was "not inclusive" and that "perhaps even a majority" of Egyptians opposed the Muslim Brotherhood leader.

Analysts said that the response from Washington fitted a pattern of weak statements that had allowed the Egyptian military to act with impunity. "[The] US had several chances to demonstrate [that] its threats to suspend aid were credible, but each time backed down," tweeted the Brookings Institution expert Shadi Hamid. "That policy has a price." Hamid also told al-Jazeera TV: "Clearing all the sit-ins without addressing fundamental political issues won't stop the clashes."

Marc Lynch commented in Foreign Policy: "It's time for Washington to stop pretending. Its efforts to maintain its lines of communication with the Egyptian military, quietly mediate the crisis and help lay the groundwork for some new, democratic political process have utterly failed. Egypt's new military regime, and a sizable and vocal portion of the Egyptian population, have made it very clear that they just want the United States to leave it alone."

For once, Washington should give them their wish. As long as Egypt remains on its current path, the Obama administration should suspend all aid, keep the embassy in Cairo closed, and refrain from treating the military regime as a legitimate government.



# World condemnation intensifies

## Turkey PM urges UN meet as France warns of civil war

AFP, Paris

Egypt's military rulers yesterday faced international condemnation over the bloody crackdown on Muslim Brotherhood protesters, with France warning of the threat of "civil war" and Turkey demanding UN action.

At least 525 people were killed in Wednesday's assaults on two Cairo protest camps of supporters of ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in the worst violence the country has seen in decades.

The United States led global condemnations overnight against the "deplorable" violence, while Paris, London and Berlin have summoned Egypt's ambassadors to voice their strong concern.

Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan called for an urgent UN Security Council meeting over Egypt's "massacre" of Morsi supporters.

China was characteristically muted, calling for "maximum restraint" from all parties, while

fellow Security Council permanent member Russia only urged tourists to avoid trips to Egypt.

Only two Gulf states that have cracked down on Islamist groups within their own borders initially voiced support for the Cairo military leaders.

French President Francois Hollande said "everything must be done to avoid a civil war" in Egypt, while his government conveyed France's "great concern over the

and return immediately to negotiations.

Turkey's Erdogan, a Morsi supporter, told reporters in Ankara that "the Security Council of the United Nations should convene quickly to discuss the situation in Egypt".

"This is a very serious massacre... against the Egyptian people who were only protesting peacefully," he added, criticising "the silence" of the global community in the face of the bloodshed.

fully recant his previously expressed support for Egypt's military-backed government.

"Today's events are deplorable and they run counter to Egyptian aspirations for peace, inclusion and genuine democracy," he said.

Denmark suspended aid worth four million euros (\$5.3 million) to Egypt "in response to the bloody events and the very regrettable turn the development of democracy has taken", development aid minister Christian Friis Bach told the Berlingske newspaper.

Further afield, Pakistan expresses its "dismay and deep concern" over the loss of innocent lives and called the events "a major setback for Egypt's return to democracy".

The Philippines urged its 6,000 nationals in Egypt to leave the country and raised the alert level due to "the escalating civil unrest and insecurity".

The United Arab Emirates and Bahrain separately voiced support for Egypt's military leaders, saying it was the state's duty to restore order.



# Egypt extends Morsi detention by 30 days

## Closes Gaza border crossing indefinitely

AGENCIES

Egyptian judicial authorities have extended deposed President Mohamed Morsi's detention period for 30 days, the state news agency said on Thursday.

Morsi, who was overthrown by the army on July 3, is being held at an undisclosed location on allegations of murder and spying.

Meanwhile, Egyptian authorities have closed the Rafah border crossing with the Gaza Strip "indefinitely" for security reasons after a day of deadly violence nationwide, a security official told AFP yesterday.

Hundreds of Palestinian travellers were left stranded on both sides of the crossing, the only gateway into the Hamas-ruled Palestinian territory that bypasses Israel, witnesses said.

The Egyptian authorities closed the border crossing for several days after the military overthrew Morsi on July 3. It later re-opened for four hours a day.

Hamas, the Palestinian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, strongly denounced Wednesday's crackdown by security forces on protest camps set up in support of Morsi, who also hails from the Brotherhood.

# Egypt PM defends swoop on pro-Morsi camps

## Interior ministry says 43 cops also killed in clashes

AGENCIES

Egypt's army-backed interim Prime Minister has defended the deadly operation by security forces to evict supporters of ousted President Mohamed Morsi from protest camps in which at least 525 people were killed as the crackdown turned into a bloodbath.

Meanwhile, the interior minister announced that forty-three policemen were killed in violence across Egypt on Wednesday, on top of the deaths of Morsi supporters.

"Eighteen police officers, including two generals and two colonels, 15 policemen, nine conscripts and a civilian employee of the police" were killed, Mohamed Ibrahim told reporters.

In a televised statement on Wednesday, Hazem el-Beblawi said the decision to break up the protests



"was not easy" and came only after the government had given mediation efforts a chance.

"We found that matters had reached a point that no self respecting state could accept," he said, citing what he describes as "the spread of anarchy and attacks on hospitals and police stations".

Bulldozers were said to have been

used to uproot the camps and drive out the protesters who were seeking Morsi's reinstatement after the 62-year-old Islamist was ousted by the military on July 3.

Conflicting reports emerged over the number of people killed on Wednesday as the death toll continued to rise.

The government on Wednesday imposed a month-long emergency after riot police backed by armoured vehicles, bulldozers and helicopters swept away the two encampments of pro-Morsi supporters.

In a press conference, the cabinet media adviser on Wednesday thanked the security forces for "exercising self-control and high-level professionalism in dispersing the sit-ins," and held the Muslim Brotherhood responsible for "escalation and violence".

# Western media slams excessive use of force

AFP, London

European and US newspapers yesterday condemned the crackdown on supporters of ousted Islamist president Mohamed Morsi in Egypt, and urged Washington to act to push both sides towards reconciliation.

The Times in London described Wednesday's assault in Cairo as a "massacre" and warned the legitimacy of Egypt's interim regime "hangs by a thread".

"This was a massacre. The (Muslim) Brotherhood has not been blameless in the period of simmering anarchy since its removal from power, but yesterday's operation was out of all proportion to any provocation," the newspaper said in an editorial.

It urged Washington to act, suggesting it delay the shipment of F16 fighters and withhold extra funds promised last year for civilian uses, saying that "quiet acquiescence will be interpreted across the Muslim world as tacit support".

The New York Times went further, calling on President Barack Obama to suspend the \$1.3 billion in annual US aid to the Egyptian military, saying the latest blood-

bath in Cairo risked sparking civil war.

Under an editorial entitled "Egypt's democracy dies a violent death", the Financial Times said it too had lost faith in the military-backed government's willingness and ability to guide the country towards inclusive elections.

Washington should suspend its aid "until the violence is halted and all parties agree to talks. The release of Mr Morsi has to be on the table," the FT said.

In France, Le Monde said the crackdown and the imposition of a state of emergency was a "terrible step backwards".

"It negates everything that has been achieved since the revolution in January 2011," which had ousted longtime ruler Mubarak.

In Germany, the Berliner Zeitung daily said the brutality of the Egyptian police and military "seems to confirm the worst fears" that the army-backed government "in no way aims for a fresh democratic start".

The Economist magazine said: "The scale of the unrest and the depth of the country's wounds are a grim omen for the future."

# Open your heart

## South Korea leader urges North

AFP, Seoul

South Korean President Park Geun-Hye yesterday called for the first family reunions with North Korea in three years, a day after the two nations agreed to reopen a joint industrial zone.

In a speech marking the anniversary of Korea's liberation from Japanese rule in 1945, Park urged Pyongyang to "open its heart" and agree to a meeting next month for families left divided for decades by the Korean War.

The South Korean leader also welcomed Wednesday's agreement on the Kaesong industrial park, which she said could start "inter-Korea relations anew" after months of sky-high tensions.

Separately, police fired a water cannon to break up a protest in central Seoul calling for better relations with North Korea, Yonhap news agency said. Some 140 students meanwhile were detained by police over another rally, it reported.

"I hope that the North will open its heart so that the divided families can be reunited around the Chuseok holiday," Park said, referring to a traditional Korean harvest festival that this year falls on September 19.

Millions of Koreans were left separated by the 1950-53 war. The last round of reunions to allow ageing relatives to meet for a few days under Red Cross auspices took place in 2010, when as in previous rounds there were scenes of high emotion.

About 72,000 South Koreans -- nearly half of them aged over 80 -- are still alive and waiting for a chance to join the highly competitive family reunion events, which select only up to a few hundred participants each time.

# What a bright idea!

## Brazilian mechanic uses plastic bottles and bleach to create light

MAIL ONLINE

A Brazilian mechanic has invented a way of lighting his house during the day without relying on electricity.

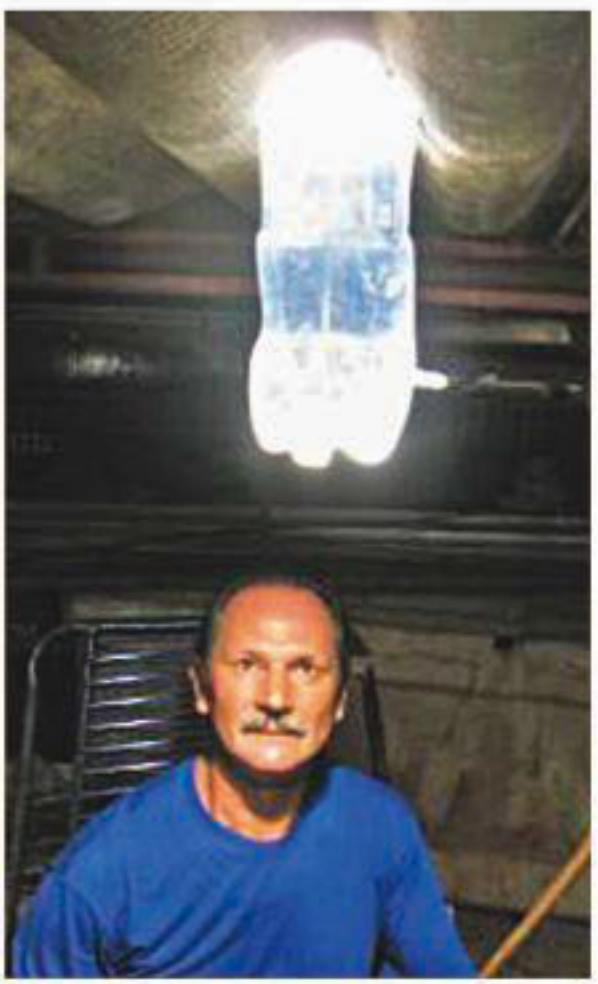
Alfredo Moser has been using plastic bottles filled up with water and a splash of bleach to illuminate dark rooms since 2002 and now the idea has now spread across the world.

It is predicted that his lighting system, which works using refraction of sunlight, will be fitted in over a million homes by the end of this year.

The secret of the liquid which fills normal plastic drinks bottles that are often thrown away, is two capfuls of bleach added to water, which stops it turning green with algae when exposed to sunlight.

Moser drilled a hole in a roof tile and then pushes the filled bottle in from below, keeping the bottle in place with polyester resin, which waterproofs the 'window' in his roof.

He told Outlook on the BBC World Service



that depending on the strength of sunlight, the light filling his home is the equivalent of between 40 and 60 watts.

The mechanic came up with the idea for his 'Moser light' during one of the frequent blackouts in Brazil in 2002.

He said only factories had power in his home city of Uberaba, in southern Brazil during the energy shortage.

Moser earned a few dollars installing the lights in his local super market and neighbours' houses but his invention has not made him a wealthy man.

He said: "There was one man who installed the lights and within a month he had saved enough to pay for the essential things for his child, who was about to be born. Can you imagine?"

Moser lamps have reportedly been fitted in over 140,000 homes in the Philippines where a quarter of the population live in poverty, as well as in 15 other countries, including Argentina, India and Fiji.

# 68TH ANNIVERSARY OF SURRENDER Japanese PM's speech skips WWII remorse

AFP, Tokyo

Japan's conservative prime minister broke with two decades of tradition yesterday by omitting any expression of remorse for Tokyo's past aggression in Asia on the anniversary of its World War II surrender.

Shinzo Abe's speech avoided words such as "profound remorse" and "sincere mourning" used by his predecessors to acknowledge the suffering caused by the Imperial Japanese Army as it stormed across East Asia -- an omission sure to anger China and South Korea.

The hawkish premier has previously expressing unease over Japan's apologies for wartime aggression. The country's neighbours have also bristled at Abe's talk of overhauling the pacifist constitution.

Seoul and Beijing lashed out yesterday when nearly 100 Japanese lawmakers, including three cabinet ministers, visited a controversial war shrine in Tokyo before Abe's speech.

The leafy site in the heart of the capital is seen overseas as a glorification of Japan's imperialist past.

In response, China summoned Japan's envoy yesterday, saying it was "strongly opposed and strictly condemned" the shrine visits. It warned relations had "no future" unless Tokyo owned up to its past. South Korea's foreign ministry blasted Tokyo for "turning a blind eye" to its violent aggression during the first half of the 20th century.

Japan surrendered on August 15, 1945 after the US dropped atomic bombs on the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

# ODDLY enough

## China zoo under fire over dog-lion scam

AFP, Beijing

A Chinese zoo's supposed "African lion" was exposed as a fraud when the dog used as a substitute started barking.

The zoo in the People's Park of Luohe, in the central province of Henan, replaced exotic exhibits with common species, according to the state-run Beijing Youth Daily.

It quoted a customer surnamed Liu who wanted to show her son the different sounds animals made -- but he pointed out that the animal in the cage labelled "African lion" was barking.

The beast was in fact a Tibetan mastiff -- a large and long-haired breed of dog.

# Obama played cards on Osama raid day

PTI, New York

Barack Obama spent a large chunk of time playing cards on the day of the Navy SEALs raid on Osama bin Laden's hideout in Pakistan in which the al-Qaida chief was killed, a former aide has said.

Obama's former body man Reggie Love revealed that he, Obama, and two others spent a large chunk of time during the 220 minute operation playing cards upstairs, The New York Magazine